

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously presented) A video game system including at least one operation device which a player manipulates to control a particular game character, the game system outputting to a display device a game screen image presenting one or more game characters, at least one of which is controllable using the operation device, comprising:

at least one map storage memory for storing map data used to display a game space;

at least one character storage memory for storing game character data of at least a first character and a second character different from the first character, said first and second character being separately controllable using the operation device;

operation detection programmed logic circuitry configured to detect manipulation made by a player to the operation device;

character switching programmed logic circuitry configured to detect when a first predetermined game condition is satisfied and change a game character controlled by the operation device between one of at least said first character and said second character upon detecting that said first predetermined game condition is satisfied;

first character operation programmed logic circuitry configured to control the first character in accordance with manipulation made to the operation device when the character switching programmed logic circuitry selects the first character as the particular game character to be controlled by the operation device;

first game screen output programmed logic circuitry configured to output to a display device a first game screen image presenting a full-extent field of view of the game space containing the first game character and other game characters;

second character operation programmed logic circuitry configured to control the second character in accordance with manipulation made to the operation device when the character switching programmed logic circuitry selects the second character as the particular game character to be controlled by the operation device;

second game screen output programmed logic circuitry configured to output to a display device a second game screen image presenting a narrow-extent field of view of the game space centered about the second game character and, at the same time, a narrow-extent field of view centered about each other player-controlled game character, if any, other than said first character, wherein different extents of a field of view of the game space are displayed depending on a predetermined handicap assigned to each player-controlled game character;

a common display device having a display screen that is viewable by several players, said common display device displaying said second game screen image; and
at least one personal display device for individual use by a single player, said personal display device displaying said first game screen image.

2. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 1, wherein
the personal display device is associated with a first operation device used by a first player; and
a second operation device is used by a second player; and wherein

when the first predetermined condition is satisfied, the first game screen output programmed logic circuitry outputs the first game screen image to the personal display device.

3. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 2, wherein the first operation device comprises a hand-held game machine apparatus which includes the personal display device and at least one manipulable element with which to control the first character.

4. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 3, further comprising a plurality of second operation devices to be operated by a plurality of second players, wherein the second game screen output programmed logic circuitry outputs to the common display device said second game screen image presenting a plurality of narrow-extent views corresponding to respective player-controlled game characters individually controllable using the plurality of second operation devices, the plurality of narrow-extent views depicting different respective game space field of views that do not overlap one another.

5. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 1, further comprising residual image display control programmed logic circuitry configured to display, after the first character has passed through a game space depicted in a narrow-extent view presented in a second game screen image, a residual artifact image along a trajectory of the first character for a predetermined period of time.

6. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 1, further comprising:

display region changing programmed logic circuitry configured to enlarge, during a predetermined period of time after a second predetermined game condition is satisfied, the narrow-extent field of view surrounding the second character presented in second game screen image so as to encompass a broader extent of the game space than that provided in said narrow-extent field of view surrounding the second character.

7. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 2, further comprising:

score storage memory including a first score storage and a second score storage;

table generation/update programmed logic circuitry configured to generate table data representing associations between the first score storage, the first player, and a game character operable by the first player, and table data representing associations between the second score storage, the second player, and a game character operable by the second player, and to update table data associations when the character switching programmed logic circuitry switches game characters controllable by an operation device;

score adding programmed logic circuitry configured to cumulatively add score points each time the first character scores points; and

score writing programmed logic circuitry configured to write points added by the score adding programmed logic circuitry to the first score storage, by referring to the table data, when the first player is associated with the first character, and to write points added by the score adding mechanism to the second score storage when the second player is associated with the first character.

8. (Previously presented) The game apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the second game screen output programmed logic circuitry also outputs a radar screen image on at least a portion of the common display device for displaying a graphic indication of a relative position of the first character and the second character as they exist within the entire game space, the radar screen image being displayed together with the second game screen image on the common display device.

9. (Previously presented) A video game system computer configured under control of a game program executable by a computer, said video game system including a common display device having a display screen that is viewable by several players, at least one personal display device for use by an individual player and one or more game operation control devices with which a player manipulates to control a particular game character, the game program including instructions for configuring the computer to output to one or more display devices a game screen image depicting one or more game characters which are controlled by one or more players using the game operation control devices, comprising:

character switching programmed logic circuitry configured to detect when a first predetermined game condition is satisfied and change a game character controlled by an operation device between one of at least a first game character and a second game character upon detecting that said first predetermined condition is satisfied;

first game screen output programmed logic circuitry configured to output to a display device a first game screen image presenting a full-extent field of view of the game space containing the first game character and other game characters; and

second game screen output programmed logic circuitry configured to output to a display device a second game screen image presenting a narrow-extent field of view of the game space centered about the second game character and, at the same time, a narrow-extent field of view centered about each other player-controlled game character, if any, other than said first character; and

display device programmed logic circuitry configured to simultaneously provide said second game screen image to said common display device and said first game screen image to a single personal display device.

10. (Previously presented) The video game system according to claim 9, wherein a first operation device is used by a first player and a second operation device distinct from the first operation device used by a second player distinct from the first player, and further comprising:

character switching programmed logic circuitry configured to switch a game character controlled by the first player with a game character controlled by the second player when the first predetermined condition is satisfied;

first game screen output programmed logic circuitry configured to output the first game screen image to a personal display device; and

second game screen output programmed logic circuitry configured to output the second game screen image to the common display device.

11. (Previously presented) The video game system according to claim 10,

wherein the first operation device comprises a hand-held game machine including a personal display device and at least one manipulable element with which to control a game character, and

first game screen output programmed logic circuitry outputs the first game screen image to the personal display device of the hand-held game machine.

12. (Previously presented) The video game system according to claim 9 further comprising a plurality of second operation devices to be operated by a plurality of second players,

wherein the game program causes the computer to function so that the second game screen output programmed logic circuitry also outputs to the common display device a plurality of narrow-extent field of view images corresponding to respective second game characters that are controlled via the plurality of second operation devices, the plurality of images depicting different respective narrow-extent game space field of views that do not overlap one another.

13. (Previously presented) The video game system according to claim 9, further comprising residual image display control programmed logic circuitry which, after the first character has passed through a game space depicted in a second game screen image, displays a residual artifact image along a trajectory of the first character for a predetermined period of time.

14. (Previously presented) The video game system according to claim 9, further comprising display region changing programmed logic circuitry which, for a predetermined period of time after a second predetermined game condition is satisfied, changes the narrow-

extent field of view within the second game screen image so as to present a broader extent field of view of the game space surrounding the second character than that provided in said narrow-extent field of view.

15. (Previously presented) The video game system according to claim 9, further comprising:

score storage memory including a first score storage and a second score storage; table generation/update programmed logic circuitry configured to generate table data representing associations between the first score storage, the first player, and a game character operable by the first player, and table data representing associations between the second score storage, the second player, and a game character operable by the second player, and to update table data associations when the character switching programmed logic circuitry switches game characters controllable by an operation device;

score adding programmed logic circuitry configured to cumulatively add score points each time the first character scores points; and

score writing programmed logic circuitry configured to write points added by the score adding programmed logic circuitry to the first score storage when the first player is associated with the first character, and to write points added by the score adding mechanism to the second score storage when the second player is associated with the first character, by referring to the table data.

16. (Previously presented) The video game system according to claim 10, wherein the game program causes the second game screen output programmed logic circuitry to also output

to the common display device a radar screen image that provides an indication of a relative position of the first character and the second character within the entire game space, the radar screen image being displayed together with the second game screen image on the common display device.

17. (Currently amended) A game system for playing a multiplayer network game including a network server computer and a plurality of terminal devices coupled to a network, each terminal device including an operation mechanism with which a player operates a game character and a display device, the network server computer exerting overall control over the network game and game screen images provided to each terminal, said network server computer comprising:

a map storage memory for storing map data used to display a game space;

a character storage memory for storing game character data of at least a first character and a second character different from the first character, said first and second character being separately controllable using different operation mechanisms;

operation detection programmed logic circuitry configured to detect manipulation made by a player to the operation mechanism;

character switching programmed logic circuitry configured to detect when a first predetermined game condition is satisfied and change a game character controlled by the operation mechanism between one of said first character and said second character upon detecting that said first predetermined game condition is satisfied;

first character operation programmed logic circuitry configured to control the first character in accordance with manipulation made to the operation mechanism when the character

switching programmed logic circuitry selects the first character as the particular game character to be controlled by the operation mechanism;

first game screen output programmed logic circuitry configured to output to a single terminal display device a first game screen image presenting a full-extent field of view display of the entire playable game space showing the first character and at least one or more other game character;

second character operation programmed logic circuitry configured to control the second character in accordance with manipulation made to the operation mechanism when the character switching programmed logic circuitry selects the second character as the particular game character to be controlled by the operation mechanism;

second game screen output programmed logic circuitry configured to output to a different terminal display device a second game screen image presenting a narrow-extent field of view of the encompassing only a small portion of the playable game space as seen from the second game character's viewpoint within the game space,

wherein each terminal device display device displays either the first game screen image or the second game screen image, each having different extents of a field of view of the game space, depending on which a predetermined handicap associated with the particular game character that is being controlled at the terminal device.

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25. (Previously presented) The video game system according to claim 9, wherein different extents of a field of view of the game space are displayed depending upon a predetermined handicap assigned to each player-controlled game character.

26. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 17, wherein different extents of a field of view of the game space are displayed depending upon a predetermined handicap assigned to each player-controlled game character.

27. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 17, wherein the second game screen output programmed logic circuitry also outputs a radar screen image on at least a portion of the terminal display device for displaying a graphic indication of a relative position of the first character and the second character as they exist within the entire game space, the radar screen image being displayed together with the second game screen image on the common display device.

28. (Previously presented) The game system according to claim 17, wherein the first game screen output programmed logic circuitry also outputs a three-dimensional representation of the full-extent of the game space on at least a portion of the terminal display device for displaying relative positions of the game characters as they exist within the entire game space.